

REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application and for the suggestions for amending the application, as well as for the consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on September 25, 2003.

Claims Objections:

In response to the objections to claims 15 and 24, those claims have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. The objection to claims 16 and 17 is not understood. With regard to claim 16, the Examiner's attention is directed to Figure 9D where one preferred embodiment of the claim is illustrated. Figure 9D illustrates the two places at which the liquid barrier is folded. With regard to claim 17, the acute angle is identified is identified by α in Figure 9D in that preferred exemplary embodiment. As indicated in paragraph 0070 of the application, if a liquid barrier is desired in which the arms of the U-shaped are more outwardly inclined, the angle α may be made a little bit smaller. This would cause the two legs of the U to deflect outwardly a little bit.

If the Examiner is still of the impression that there is a problem with claims 16 and 17, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the problem may be discussed.

Absent further clarification from the Examiner, it is assumed that the claim objection issues have been resolved.

Art Rejections:

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 12-14 and 18-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5486,168, hereinafter *Runeman et al.* As set forth in paragraphs 0011-0013 of the application, one of the objects of the

present invention is to provide a liquid barrier in an absorbent product for men which is arranged to prevent urine emitted by the user from leaking from the surface of the absorption body towards the crotch region of the user. The Examiner's attention is directed to last five lines of claim 1 which defines, among other elements, that a liquid barrier is applied on the liquid permeable layer at the narrower end section of the absorbent body to prevent urine emitted by the user from leaking from the surface of the absorption body towards the crotch region of the user. The Examiner's analysis of claims 1, 2, 6-8, 12-14, and 18-22 is completely silent with regard to the claimed liquid barrier. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to either withdraw this rejection or to clarify as to where *Runeman et al.* teaches the claimed combination, which includes the liquid barrier as set forth in claim 1.

Claims 3-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by *Runeman et al.* in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0181883, hereinafter *Olson*. Claims 3-5 depend from claim 1, and the Examiner's discussion of *Olson*, as well as *Runeman et al.*, does not describe the claimed combination that includes the liquid barrier as discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, the Examiner is also respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 3-5 based on *Runeman et al.* and *Olson*.

Claims 9-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Runeman et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,558,734, hereinafter *Sherrod*. Claims 9-11 also depend from claim 1, and, as set forth above with respect to claims 3-5, the Examiner's discussion of *Runeman et al.* and *Sherrod* does not

include a description of the claimed invention including the liquid barrier.

Accordingly, claims 9-11 are also patentable over the applied prior art.

Claims 15-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Runeman et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,810,799, hereinafter *Slater*. However, *Slater* teaches away from the present invention in that *Slater* teaches the use of a ridge or barrier provided at an upper end of the front section of the diaper. According to the claim 1, the liquid barrier is applied at the narrower end section of the absorption body and is arranged to prevent urine emitted from the user from leaking from the surface of the absorption body towards the crotch region of the user. The barrier taught by *Slater* would have no application in preventing leakage towards the crotch region of a user. Accordingly, claims 15-17 are also patentable over *Runeman et al.* and *Slater*.

Similar comments apply to claim 23, which appears to also be rejected over a combination of *Runeman et al.* and *Slater*.

Claims 24 and 25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Runeman et al.* However, claims 24 and 25 depend from claim 1, and are thus also patentable over *Runeman et al.*

To further define the protection to which the Applicants are entitled, new claims 26 – 28 are submitted above. New independent claim 26 is similar to claim 1 except that it does not require that the liquid barrier is applied on the liquid permeable layer. Claims 27 – 28 depend from claim 26. Accordingly, claims 26 – 28 are patentable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this Amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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